SECTOR		
A	ARMARIO	
B	ESTANTERIA	
C	FICHERO	
D	ESTANTE	
E	CARPETA	
F	BIBLIORATO	
G	CAJA/ON	
H		
I	ALFABETICO	
J	EJEMPLAR	

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SYNOPSIS OF THE INEXPLICABLE FALLACIES

IN ...

ROBERT B. SMITH

SYNOPSIS OF THE INEXPLICABLE FALLACIES IN ROBERT SMITH

SYNOPSIS OF THE INEXPLICABLE FALLACIES IN THE FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH CLAIMS TO SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE MALVINAS ISLANDS.

1. Claims on the basis of discovery are groundless.
2. British occupation occurred a year after, and in full knowledge of the existence of a French, and later Spanish, colony on an adjacent island. At no time did the British make any official manifestation of their claim, either to the Colonial officials, or their respective governments. Why?
3. After repeated Spanish warnings the British are expelled from their fort (never a colony) in 1771; but under a convention with the Spanish, a clause of which specifically states that prior rights over the sovereignty of the islands are not affected, the British actually proceed to reoccupy the fort, thus tacitly recognizing the terms of the convention. The British today reject the clause on sovereignty. How can they?
4. Less than three years later, in 1774, the British abandon the fort, allegedly for economic reasons. The British treasury apparently remained under stress for the next 56 years, as they made no effort to reoccupy the fort in that interim, in which a succession (20) of Spanish governors administer the Malvinas Islands. Why was there no British reiteration of their claims during that period?
5. On departing, the British left a plaque claiming sovereignty over the entire Malvinas group, a right which they had never officially claimed before any foreign authority up to that time. They had never been sole occupants of the islands. Why, then, the plaque? What evidence is there that the British ever officially denied Spanish sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands "to Spain herself"?

6. In 1806 and 1807 the British make successive efforts to occupy Buenos Aires. The attacks are repelled, but no effort is made to take possession of the Malvinas. Why?
7. In 1820, the recently emancipated United Provinces of Buenos Aires hold an official flag raising ceremony at Puerto Soledad on the Malvinas Islands. The event is widely publicized in the European press. Why was there no British protest?
8. In 1825 the British, having recognized the independence of the United Provinces of Buenos Aires, sign with them a treaty of Friendship, trade and shipping. Why did the treaty omit mention of British claims to sovereignty of the Malvinas?

THE MALVINAS ISLANDS ERUPTION, A TRAVESTY OF ERRORS

By Robert B. Smith

In order to understand the Malvinas Islands eruption, it is obviously necessary to first look at the causative factors which spawned it. Strangely enough, in this writer's opinion, they are far removed from the mere historical fact that on April 2nd 1982, the Islands were re-occupied humanely, but nevertheless by armed force, by the de facto military government of Argentina under the presidency of Leopoldo Galtieri. In actual fact, inherent fallacies in the original concept, the formation and current procedures within the United Nations, lie at the heart of this unnecessary armed conflict. Supreme power, centered in the Security Council, which, though conceived as a diplomatic forum dedicated to the peace and security of the member nations, has in practice developed into a political arena utilized by the five permanent members, each endowed with absolute discretionary veto power, to ensure their own individual security, the promotion of their international strategic and economic objectives, and even the personal political aspirations of their individual Heads of State.

The public statement, (condensed) widely quoted in the international press, by Britain's Madame Thatcher after the inevitable re-conquest of the Malvinas Islands group "Britain is great again", the victory of a major power with the moral, material and strategic support of a super power, over Argentina, an emerging country, is undescribably banal, except in the light of a personal

political propaganda effort. The performance of the UN as a peace keeping entity will be examined and analyzed in detail later on. Sufficient to say, at this point, that there have been infinitely more armed conflicts and confrontations, albeit mostly undeclared, since its inception, than in any other 37 year period in world history.

Another remark of Thatcher's, repeated on more than one occasion and also widely quoted in the press, after the Argentine occupation, was "The Falkland Islands have been a British colony for 150 years, and their sovereignty is not open to question", forms one of the prime incentives for presenting the ensuing chronology. The sovereignty of Malvinas Islands will herein be examined thoroughly.

Before embarking on such an investigation, it is perhaps expedient to point out that Argentina has repeatedly raised the question, and maintained its claims from the time of the original forceful occupation by Britain in 1833. Since 1965 it has continually pressed its demand for a negotiated, peaceful, diplomatic solution within the framework of UN resolution 1514. For 16 years Argentina has been the victim of digression, circumvention, and every other evasive manoeuvre, surreptitious or obvious, factual or inventive, that the British have been able to devise - tactics for which they have demonstrated an evident, if hateful, talent for centuries in their international dealings; this in the face of two resolutions of the UN General Assembly,

numbers 2065 of 1965 and 3160 of 1974, the latter adopted by a vote of 116 in favour, 14 abstentions, none contrary, calling for a determination on the sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands without further delay. No result to date! This intransigent statement by Thatcher leads to the inevitable suspicion that Britain's claim is tenuous at best, if not undemonstrable, and hence the desire to avoid any relevant investigation.

It would be interesting to discover the British reaction to a motion put before the Security Council of the United Nations phrased along the following lines: "In consideration of the inordinate delay of the contesting claimants, Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain, in resolving the issue of the sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands by peaceful negotiation, in accordance with the stipulations laid down by General Assembly Resolution number 1514, as supported by resolutions 2065 and 3160, and that as the result an armed conflict has occurred, that the dispute hereby be subjected to the procedure of an investigation in depth of the relevant historical chronology and respective claims as averred by the contestants, to be conducted by the International Court of Justice in accordance with current concepts of International Law, as determined or acknowledged by the International Law Commission, and report its findings to the President of the Security Council with the minimum possible delay."

Needless to say, were the United States to sponsor such

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a presentation to the Security Council, it would do much to repair its sadly deteriorated relations with Latin America. However, the British would undoubtedly declare the proposal substantive, in lieu of procedural, and resort to their power of veto to eliminate it from consideration.

At this point, some curiosity will probably have been aroused as to the identity,and qualifications,of Robert B. Smith to embark on a presentation such as this.

I am a native born American, resident in Argentina since 1916, educated in the United States at primary (to 7th grade), secondary and university levels, having pursued a commercial career in Argentina since 1933. From 1940 to 1946 I was an unofficial advisor to the American Department of State and later the Board of Economic Warfare. In this activity I suggested the procedure which, after adoption, was termed "The Decentralization of Export Control" and, on the creation of the Board of Economic Warfare, resulted in the incorporation of the so called "Black List Sections" into American Embassies throughout the world during World War II. I also proposed the installation of a high power radio station which was eventually installed in the Uruguayan river port town of Carmelo, to counter the pro German sentiment which unfortunately existed in Argentina during virtually the entire war. In 1976, for reasons of commercial expediency I initiated naturalization proceedings and in June 1977 became an Argentine citizen. My commercial activities took me

frequently to the United States in which I have travelled extensively and visited every state in the Union outside of Alaska. I likewise have travelled extensively in Europe, particularly in Spain, France, Germany and the British Isles.

There should be some record of my activities during World War II in the files of the Department of State and the Board of Economic Warfare, although it may not be extensive since I had no political or monetary aspirations.

I have spent my entire adult life as an objective observer of events in the United States, as seen from a distance, since I have never resided there, except as a young boy. The suggestions and opinions which may be expressed in this treatise are meant to be constructive, in the full realization that some may be impractical and thus impossible to implement.

To return to the subject at hand - the determination of the sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands - from what I know of world history, the acquisition of territorial rights resolve themselves into five headings:

1. - By right of discovery.
2. - Geophysical considerations.
3. - Exploration, colonization and development of unoccupied territory.
4. - By Treaty, with or without, or as a result of the use, or threat of use, of armed force.

5. - Outright conquest.

As a prelude to the investigation in hand, and an exposition of the British claims, I have resorted to the historical excerpts from the text articles on the Falkland Islands as they appear in the Encyclopedia Britannica in the 11th, 14th and 15th editions, published in 1910, 1936 and 1974 respectively. They are attached as Annexes I, II and III and indexed by line for ready reference. A quick reading of the three will immediately show up the notable differences, a profusion of ambiguous,ill defined statements, and several cases of insinuation of fact,by association through clever phrasing and composition. The Encyclopedia Britannica, prestigious as it may be, is far from objective or unbiased where questions involving British Matters of State are concerned. The most patent lie can be distorted into the appearance of truth by the lips of an Englishman. (Not original with me.)

I. - Discovery

The first sentences in Annexes I and II are identical and give the impression of being historically factual. Closer examination however of the first lines in both instances will show that the statement "The Falkland Islands were first seen by Davis in the year 1591/2" might very well be merely biographical. In other words, it does not state that Davis was the first to see the islands. Annex III

has been alleviated to indicate that the discoverer was uncertain,and that Davis was only a likely candidate. Evidently something occurred between 1936 and 1974 to cause a change. Could it possibly be the adoption by the United Nations of Resolution 1514 on decolonization, and that Argentina had started agitating within this concept? Could the British perhaps be concerned that their oft repeated claims to sovereignty by right of discovery were about to be disproved?

In actual fact, maps began to appear in Europe, namely those by Schoner and Waldseemüller, the first in 1515 and the second in 1520, on which appear the Malvinas Islands. There is a further map by Pedro Reinel in 1522, Diego Rivero in 1529 and Alonso de Santa Cruz in 1541. The islands appear under various names such as San Anton, Santon or Sanson, and on one they are called Los Patos. They further appear on the well known planisphere produced by Sebastian Caboto in 1544, a copy of which is in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, not to mention Mercator's map, the first one drawn in the projection which carries his name, which appeared in 1569. The Diego Rivero map was seen in 1933 by Captain Hector Ratto of the Argentine Navy in the Weimar Library, in what is now East Germany. Weimar was extensively damaged by bombing in the Second World War and the Rivero map may not have survived. In any event, it seems evident that one or more

explorers sighted the Malvinas, probably before the birth of John Davis.

With regard to the sovereignty of the Islands by virtue of discovery, it would make no difference whether the discoverer were Spanish or Portuguese, the Islands would still pertain to the Spanish under the provisions of the Treaty of Tordesillas of 1493,as modified in 1494 by Papal Bull, which established that lands discovered to the West of a line drawn 390 leagues westward from the Cape Verd Islands would be Spanish, while those East of that line would be Portuguese, to which both nations subscribed. It is interesting to note that the line thus established, which falls near the 49th meridian of longitude, corresponds almost exactly to the coastal limits of Brazil today. No doubt the National Geographic Society or the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. will have historical information,or perhaps even copies of one or more of the maps mentioned. In any event, any British claim to the Malvinas Islands, by virtue of discovery, I believe to be totally disproved and original Spanish sovereignty clearly established.

2. - Geophysical Considerations

That the Malvinas Islands lie on the Argentine coastal shelf can hardly be questioned as there is not 100 fathoms of water at any point in the 240 nautical miles which separate them from the mainland.

In any event, the British have never made any claims under this heading, but the Argentines obviously have a very definite one.

The following two headings are somewhat confused as they are complicated by the fact that alleged British claims are inextricably involved in both.

3. - Exploration, occupation, colonization and development of unoccupied territories.

The British Admiral George Anson projected an expedition of exploration to the Malvinas Islands in 1748. The Spanish Minister of Naval Affairs and Shipping, Jose de Carbajal y Lancaster, got news of the project and, fully aware of the implications of such an expedition, lodged a protest with the British Admiralty and the plan was dropped. It thus appears that, at least at that point in time, Spanish dominion over the Islands was tacitly recognized by the British.

In 1764 Luis A. De Bougainville founded the first permanent colony on the East Island and called it San Luis. On Spanish protest the colony was ceded to Spain in April of 1767 in recognition of Spanish sovereignty by the French. The term "Spain having bought out the French" which appears in Line 9 of Annex III, probably refers to the fact that Charles III of Spain agreed to indemnify De Bougainville, who had invested his entire personal fortune in the venture, for the buildings, armament, ships, tenders

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and stores which were included in the arrangement. This was magnanimous on the part of the Spanish king who, as De Bougainville admitted, had no obligation to compensate a trespasser, but it must be remembered that,due to the third "pact de famille" of 1761, Spain and France were allied under Bourbon kings.

On the 23rd of January 1765, Commodore John Byron, later Admiral Lord Byron, the grandfather of the well known poet and satirist, established a port and fort on the small island of Trinidad, which the British called Saunders, off the North East coast of the Western island, with the usual ceremonial procedure, claiming sovereignty over all the adjacent islands in the name of H.R.M. George III. The fort was named Egmont, after the first Lord of the Admiralty, who planned to use it as a base for attack on Spanish shipping on the West coast of South America, in emulation of Sir Francis Drake nearly 200 years before. In 1767 Spain lodged the same protest with the British at Egmont, and were not aware that they had not complied until the Spanish pilot Mario Plata discovered Captain Anthony Hunt in Falkland Sound with the frigate "Tamar". The Spanish governor at Port Soledad then sent a reconnoitering expedition to check on the situation, found the British still ensconced, and set off to Buenos Aires to inform the colonial governor of the Colony of the River Plate, named Bucareli. Governor Bucareli, for his part,realizing that due to the elapsed time in which the British had clandestinely

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continued to occupy Egmont, deciding that further pacific approaches were useless, put into effect orders received from Madrid two years previously, to evict the British by force, if necessary. He sent a squadron of five ships under the command of Captain Juan Madariaga to resolve the situation.

On arrival of this fleet at Port Egmont it was found that Captain Hunt had left the fort, but the British frigate "Favourite" under Captain William Maltby was at anchor. After trying persuasion, the Spanish commander sent an ultimatum to Maltby as well as Captain George Farmer who had command of the fort tower. On receiving a defiant British reply, the Spanish ships began cannonading in earnest and after a rather prolonged exchange of artillery, the "Favourite" surrendered and the fort raised a flag of truce. The terms of surrender were simply that the British were not to leave until the Malvinas Islands governor, Ruiz Puente, could organize a garrison of occupation. The eviction finally took place on the 10th of June 1770.

There naturally followed an energetic British protest, threatening war if the fort was not returned, a threat that was probably bluff. The British Parliament had been in a state of instability during the entire decade of 1760 to 1770 with various factions vying for power. These were the Rockinghams, Grenvilles, Chathamites (Pitt the elder) and the

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Bedfords. King George the III had become exasperated with the continual contention, and had finally appointed Frederick Lord North Prime Minister, in January 1770. North, while an adept Parliamentarian, nevertheless had no following nor public image, and therefore his position as Head of Government was uncomfortably precarious. It is doubtful that a declaration of war could have been promulgated under such conditions, and it politically suited Lord North to resolve the situation expeditiously to avoid an erruption in Parliament, which was already clamouring for his removal. Henceforth a succession of notes were exchanged between the British and Spanish courts through the intervention of the Spanish Ambassador in London, the Prince of Masserano, and the British Lord Rochford.

Finally on the 22nd of January 1771, an acceptable arrangement was reached, to "Ammend the affront to the British Crown" via a communication signed in London by the Prince of Masserano, appointed extraordinary Ambassador in the name of King Charles III of Spain, acceeding to the return of the "fort and port called Egmont" in the exact state in which it existed on June 10th 1770. A further paragraph stated that the return of the fort "cannot, nor should not, affect in any way the question of previous rights of sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, also called Falkland". The fort was returned to the British, with all formality on September 16th, 1771.

From several sources it appears that behind the scenes a secret arrangement was made by which Lord North assured the Spanish Ambassador that Egmont would be returned as soon as the chaotic situation in the British Parliament was terminated. That such a compromise existed seems to be borne out by the fact that, immediately after the public elections of April 3rd 1774, which firmly stabilized his government, Lord North ordered the evacuation and the British departed on the 22nd of May of that year. At no time had any colonization taken place by the British (see line 23 of Annex I). Whereas, strangely enough, Annex I simply ends on the note that in 1771 "Spain yielded the island to Britain by convention", the Spanish in fact had conceded only the right of occupation of the "fort and port called Egmont". The plaque claiming sovereignty over the entire group of islands by the British Crown (see lines 13 and 14 of Annex III) was actually found,attached to the tower of the fort the following year, and delivered to the Colonial Governor in Buenos Aires. Since it was cast in lead, it was obviously prepared in Britain, and thus would constitute a planned, typically duplicitous ploy, for eventual future use, if convenient. It was merely stored away and eventually returned to Britain with General Beresford, who was captured, together with his entire contingent of British troops, in the attempted invasion of the River Plate in 1806. I cannot conceive that an arbitrary symbol of this kind could establish any valid claim under International Law, regardless of British claims that the

plaque represented a declared intention to reoccupy. After a lapse of 59 years? Remember that any British reoccupation would still have had to have been under Spanish sovereignty, the situation which existed on June 10, 1770.

The British allege that the evacuation of Port Egmont was due to reasons of economy (see line 12 of Annex III). It is hardly credible that the maintenance of a garrison of less than 50 men on a Malvinas Island could place such a strain on the British Treasury as to warrant its withdrawal, nor that the need for austerity should continue for 59 years. It seems much more likely that Lord North had to devise some justification for giving the instructions for withdrawal, as the commitment to evacuate made some three years before, of course, could not be divulged before the Parliament, from which it had been kept secret. Furthermore, it was necessary to make it appear that the retirement was voluntary instead of obligatory, to warrant the emplacement of the previously mentioned proprietorial plaque, which idea probably originated in the Foreign Office which North, under the circumstances, could not oppose.

The British,in response to repeated claims by Argentina for the restitution of the archipielago, (when they bothered to reply at all) have always alleged that the pact as established by the communication of the Prince of Masserano of January 22nd 1771, ceded sovereignty over the entire island group to the British

Crown. Byron had made a similar claim on establishing the fort at Egmont in 1765, in the full knowledge that a prior French colony existed on East Malvina, and after April of 1767, a Spanish Governor responsible to Buenos Aires was installed. During this period the British occupation of Egmont was semi clandestine. After the eviction of 1770, and re-occupation of Egmont in May of 1771 by the British, their presence was recognized by the Spanish as being authorized. If, in fact, the British considered themselves sovereign over the islands, why then did the British Government permit a Spanish administration, under a Spanish appointed Governor to continue functioning? Is this not clear evidence that the British Government was perfectly aware of the temporary nature of their occupation?

Exploration of the Malvinas had been going on ever since the first years of the eighteenth century by a succession of whaling and sealing expeditions, mainly French, but also of other nations including British. The only purely exploratory expedition that I have turned up is that of a Frenchman, Amadeo Fresier with the ship "Marianne", who landed on the islands in 1714 and later wrote a book whose title,translated into English,is "Account of a trip at Sea". The French historian Paul Groussac describes it as the first scientific work on the archipielago.

With regard to British occupation, at no time were they sole occupants. The fort of Egmont existed for

27 months in conjunction with a French colony, which Egmont was not. It then semi-clandestinely coexisted with a Spanish Colonial Administration under Captain Felipe Ruiz Puente for an additional 32 months. After the eviction of the British in 1770, Egmont was re-occupied by convention, under Spanish sovereignty, for an additional 31 months. Total British presence on the Malvinas Islands was seven and a half years. The Spanish occupation of the islands, with exercise of sovereignty under colonized conditions, was 44 years and the Argentine 22 years. How can the British have a claim due to occupation?

Insofar as colonization and development is concerned they themselves admit there was no such activity at Egmont.

Conclusion: The British have no valid claim on the basis of exploration, occupation, colonization nor development.

4. - By Treaty, with or without, or as a result of the use, or threat of use, of armed force.

The use of armed force in an endeavor to incorporate the Spanish colony of the River Plate into the British Empire was employed on four separate occasions. In 1670 Captain Narbrough took possession of Port of Desire (Puerto Deseado) on the Patagonean coast, in the name of the British Government and was evicted. In 1762 toward the end of the 7 years war, in which Spain had become involved due to the family agreement

with France entered into the year before, the British assembled a fleet,in conjunction with the Portuguese,for a further invasion attempt. This was legitimate, since Britain was, in fact, at war with Spain. The flagship of the fleet was the ship of the line, the "Clyde". On attacking the fort of Colonia, the expedition came to grief when the "Clyde" caught fire, blew up and sank. The British Commander had not expected to find the Spaniards at Colonia in such force, and the remaining four smaller ships quickly withdrew, before the substantial Spanish fleet, anchored at Buenos Aires, got wind of the event.

In 1806 the British tried again with a force of some 1200 men under General Beresford and since they easily subdued the Spanish militia stationed at Buenos Aires, the Viceroy having hurriedly fled, they managed to occupy the city. The colonials however quickly raised an overwhelming force and surrounded the British camp, took General Beresford prisoner, and marched what remained of the British force back to their ships, anchored to the South of the city. The ships under the command of General Popham retired to Cape Town where a vastly increased force, variously estimated, from different sources, at from 9000 to 12000 men, was assembled,and returned to the River Plate in 1807, under General Whitelocke. Troops were landed both North and South of the city of Buenos Aires, and since it took considerable time to organize the attack, the colonials had a chance to

make preparations. The main approaches to the city were rudely barricaded with improvised cow hide defenses and cannons loaded with grape shot were placed on the parapeted flat roofs, characteristic of Spanish colonial construction. The invaders, in true British fashion, came marching in solid phalanx formation, down the fortified approaches, apparently having never heard of infiltration tactics. The resulting carnage reduced the British forces by one third on the first attack, which broke the morale of the troops and General Whitelocke opted to withdraw. General Whitelocke was later Court Martialed for incompetence and was cashiered out of the British Army. Amazingly enough, lines 15 and 16 of Annex III, lists the uprising of the colonies in 1806 as being against Spanish authority, when in reality they were repelling a British invasion.

At this point the British attempts to subjugate the Spanish colony of the River Plate, lapse into dormancy for the next 16 years until the occupation of the Malvinas Islands by force in 1833.

Throughout these attempted invasions there are no official treaties or documentation other than those of surrender. The only agreement ever consumated up to the year 1833 relevant to the Malvinas Islands, was that established by the communication of the Prince of Masserano on January 22nd 1771, already mentioned on page 14, and the determination as to whether or not that agreement confirmed British

sovereignty over the entire island group, as the British have continually maintained, seems to be the crux of the entire dispute. Had such sovereignty been conferred, or had the British held the conviction that it had, they would have immediately evicted the Spanish authorities who were exercising the functions of government, on their reoccupation of Egmont in 1771. Wherefore there would have been no need to leave the aforementioned plaque, in an effort to maintain their situation of sovereignty, had it ever existed.

All of the available evidence therefore denies that the British ever held a valid sovereignty, even in their own estimation, until their occupation by force on the 3rd of January 1833. The only valid conclusion is that the British claim is based only on outright conquest.

Interim Pertinent History Between 1776-1833

In 1776 the Spanish colony of the River Plate, which had previously been administered from Lima, was created a Viceroyalty, since Spanish King Charles III was determined to reorganize the Latin American colonies under more effective administration. The new Viceroyalty was vast in extent, taking in parts of Southern Peru, all of Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay and what is present day Argentina. Strangely enough, on page 701 of Volume X of the 15th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, there appears a map captioned

"Spanish and Portuguese America in 1784" accredited to the book "Peoples and Politics of Latin America" by Mary W. Williams. The Britannica seems to have "slipped up", since this map clearly shows the Malvinas Islands as pertaining to the Spanish Viceroyalty of the River Plate. I have not been able to locate this book in Argentina to determine whether the text makes any specific reference to the Malvinas Islands.

Since the rich Potosi silver mines, located in present day Bolivia, now pertained to the new Viceroyalty of the River Plate, silver bullion began moving from River Plate ports, and British privateers, of course, took their toll.

In 1810 the River Plate colonly rebelled against Spain, which was not the Spain to which the colonists had been so fanatically loyal in repelling the British invasions of 1806 and 1807. Joseph Bonaparte was occupying the Spanish throne, and the country was in political prostration and territorial disarray. The Spanish abandoned the Malvinas Islands in 1811, and the authorities in Buenos Aires emplaced a small garrison and a military officer to take over the responsibilities of administration, on an interim basis.

The final Spanish withdrawal from the entire River Plate area did not take place until 1816 by which time the colonist's beloved Ferdinand VII,

imprisoned by Napoleon during the peninsular war, had reassumed the throne of Spain.

The urge for independence by that time, however, had become too deeply impregnated to delay the process of emancipation. There then ensued a series of armed conflicts all over Spanish Latin America, which was not to result in complete stabilization until after 1860.

It was not until 1820 that the Governing Council in Buenos Aires got around to taking official possession of the Malvinas Islands in the form of a flag raising ceremony, which took place on the 6th of November 1820, conducted by Captain David Jewitt, an American National, in the service of the River Plate Navy. Present was British Captain James Weddel, who, with his complete crew, in full dress uniform applauded the act. The event was widely reported in the European press but there was no official reaction from Great Britain regarding violation of sovereignty.

In the same year the Buenos Aires government ennacted a decree establishing control over fishing and exploitation rights of the Patagonian coastal waters and the Malvinas Islands.

In 1824 Luis Vernet, through the intervention of George Pacheco, was accorded the right of exploitation of the islands, which he proceeded to do with

such beneficial effect on their development, that he was appointed as Nautical and Military Commander of the Malvinas Islands on August 30 in the year 1829.

There was a British reaction to this event, in the form of a note presented by the Commercial Attache in Buenos Aires, Mr. Woodbine Parish, on the 29th of November of that year, asserting the British sovereign claims over the Islands, "based on first discovery and subsequent occupation of said islands which were confirmed by the restoration of an establishment of His Royal British Majesty, in the year 1771, it having been attacked and occupied by a Spanish force the previous year."

The note was merely filed by the Argentine authorities, since the British, as we have seen, were not the original discoverers of the Islands, nor were they the first to establish occupation. They never had a presence in the Islands, except under foreign sovereignty, which they had never officially questioned, nor was British sovereignty remotely confirmed by the restoration to the British of Fort Egmont; the first settlement, it will be remembered, was French, whose rights were transferred to Spain in recognition of Spanish sovereignty.

The Parish note was presented not withstanding a prior Treaty of Commerce, Friendship and Shipping, consummated between the United Provinces of Argentina and Great Britain in 1825, in which there was no

mention of any impending territorial claims over the Malvinas Islands by the British.

The Lexington Incident

We now arrive at what must be one of the most shameful episodes in American history. In August 1831 the governor of the Malvinas Islands, Luis Vernet, felt obliged to capture and impound three American sealing ships, the "Breakwater", "Harriet" and "Superior". The three ships were well known in those waters, and had previously been admonished by Vernet with regard to their violation of the Law passed in 1820 (see page 21 paragraph 3). The "Breakwater" managed to escape and reach its home port of Stonington, Connecticut.

Shortly after the arrival of the "Breakwater", bearing the news of the precarious situation involving whalers and seal hunters in Malvinas Islands waters, this intelligence was published in the "Boston Columbian Sentinel" on October 24th, and repeated in London on the 31st of December in the "British Packet", with an additional commentary that "jurisdiction over these waters by the Government in Buenos Aires had been previously been denied recognition by our (the British) government". This can only refer to Woodbine Parish's note to the government of the United Provinces of the River Plate on the 29th of November 1829 (see page 22), since it was the only

one ever officially addressed by the British to any government on the question of Malvinas Islands sovereignty up to that time.

At this point it seems advisable to explain that Governor Vernet, while legally established in his official capacity by appointment from Buenos Aires, was also dedicating himself to the management and control of his own personal establishment which involved sheep and cattle raising, ship chandling, commercial trading, and other activities, as his official duties did not require his full time. He had appointed as his deputy one Mathew Brisbane to function in his absence, both officially and commercially.

Governor Vernet incidentally was a very cultured individual as is borne out by "Narrative and Survey Voyages of H.M. ships "Adventure" and "Beagle" 1826 to 1836" Volume II page 266 by Robert Fitzroy. The passage reads as follows: "The governor Luis Vernet received me with cordiality. He possesses much information and speaks several languages. His house is long and low, of one story, with very thick walls of stone. I found in it a good library of Spanish, German and English works. A lively conversation passed at dinner, the party consisting of Mr. Vernet and his wife, Mr. Brisbane and others; in the evening we had music and dancing. In the room was a grand piano forte; Mrs. Vernet, a Buenos Aires lady,

gave us some excellent singing, which seemed not a little strange at the Falkland Islands, where we expected to find only a few sealers." Captain Fitzroy later had occasion to visit Puerto Soledad after the impending ravages visited upon it by Commander Duncan and his crew of the "Lexington" and expressed total dismay at the condition in which the colony was found. At that time the colony was under the jurisdiction of the Deputy Governor Mathew Brisbane, whom Fitzroy describes as a perfect gentleman. Both Governor Vernet and Brisbane were later fiercely reviled as we shall see, by the American Commander as well as American officials stationed at Buenos Aires, all three of which could have learned a great deal with respect to genteel civilized behaviour from their victims.

It is important to keep in mind that there was a duly constituted Law to control fishing, whaling and the hunting of amphibians involving the customary three mile limit, which was practically universally recognized at that time (see page 21). Seal hunting, however, takes place on land, and thus unquestionably was an activity which violated territorial jurisdiction. Vernet's application of these restrictions was flexible, and it must be admitted that very often his personal interests came into play. Thus it was, that Vernet reached an agreement with Captains Davison of the "Harriet" and Congar of the "Superior", that he would proceed with the former's ship to Buenos Aires carrying the documents of the "Superior"

for determination by court ruling to resolve their situation. Meanwhile, he authorized Captain Congar to go seal hunting on the mainland, outside of his jurisdiction, the resulting profits to be divided equally.

The above has been mentioned with a view of what is to come, which involved multiple accusations from American sources that Vernet's government was piratical, that he himself was a pirate, and that he was not officially or legally constituted as the governor in charge of the administration of the island territory, which he unquestionably was. With regard to the charges of piracy, pirates are not known to sail their "prizes" to their capital port, to be arraigned before a prize court, under due process of law.

The "Harriet" departed Puerto Soledad carrying Vernet and his family under the command of Davison, but with a substitute crew, arriving in Buenos Aires on the 19th of November, the vessel being immediately turned over to the Port Captain for the initiation of legal proceedings. Captain Davison, of course, at once contacted the American Consul, George W. Slocum, who lost no time in taking aggressive action. On the 21st of November he required a statement from the Government as to whether it intended to impound the "Harriet". On receiving an affirmative reply, he issued a statement the following day denying the United Provinces Government "jurisdiction over the Malvinas Islands, Tierra del Fuego and its dependencies,

and consequently all authority to restrict in the slightest the rights of fishing or other activities of the free citizens of the United States of America". He could have hardly been authorized by his government to make such a statement, in view of the time factor.

It so happens that, by chance, hardly by design, (remembering that the "Breakwater" had arrived in the United States barely a month before) the armed sloop "Lexington", which normally was assigned to the American Squadron standing in Brazil, was anchored in the port of Montevideo. It arrived in Buenos Aires, at the request of Slocum, on the 30th of November and after the usual formalities its Commander,Silas Duncan, instigated the transmission of a message to the Government of the United Provinces of the River Plate, announcing his imminent departure for the Malvinas Islands "for the protection of the citizens and commerce of the United States". A few days later,he himself,presented to the Government a formal order for the delivery "of said Luis Vernet, guilty of piracy and robbery, to the Government of the United States for trial . . . " Needless to say, the local Government took no such action and Commander Duncan had to content himself with taking on board, instead of Vernet, Captain Davison, captain and owner of the impounded "Harriet", who was under personal restraint, by judicial order, not to leave the city of Buenos Aires. He could no doubt be useful

to Commander Duncan, due to his familiarity with Malvinas Islands waters, and particularly Puerto Soledad.

On the 28th of December 1831 the "Lexington" arrived at Puerto Soledad and all witnesses are unanimous in declaring that the ship was flying a French flag, which approaches, much more than any act of Governor Vernet's, the practice of piracy. The previously mentioned Deputy Governor, Mathew Brisbane, promptly went on board to pay his respects to the supposedly French captain, and was just as promptly confined to the ship's brig. Duncan thereupon disembarked with his crew, proceeded to spike the guns, blow up the arsenal, destroyed all arms and then,as a matter of diversion,ravaged private property without, however, robbing them. He did, nevertheless, cause to be loaded aboard the schooner "Dash", which was anchored in the harbour, all the seal skins found in the warehouse which Davison, being present, declared to be his. Declaring the colony "open territory" Duncan then departed threatening further retaliatory action if the activities within Malvinas waters of American ships were interfered with in the future.

The fleet of American whalers and sealers thereupon returned, the crews of which indulged in further damage to property, and subjected those colonists who had not fled to the hinterland, to considerable mauling; protesters were unmercifully beaten. Some sources report rapings, but these are unproven. The

town was plastered with posters declaring the colony definitely disbanded, and some colonists actually did abandon the islands - for good.

The "Lexington" set sail for Montevideo carrying with it Vernet's Deputy Brisbane, and six other citizens of the United Provinces of the River Plate. These he released on arrival at the port and proceeded to return to the United States taking with him Captain Davison of the "Harriet", (since he, a fugitive from justice under the dictum of the Buenos Aires court, dared not return there) presumably to report on his activities.

The incident did not end there. President Andrew Jackson, reacting to the news of events in the Malvinas, in his annual message to Congress, delivered on the 6th of December 1831, had stated "I shall without delay send a minister to enquire into the nature of the circumstances, and also of the claim, if any, that is set up by that Government to those islands". The President's words would seem to indicate that, at the time, he had no knowledge of either the impending attack on Puerto Soledad by the "Lexington" nor the prior denial of territoriality over the Malvinas Islands to the United Provinces of the River Plate. Thus both Slocum and Duncas apparently acted without specific authority from Washington. The fact that the minister in the person of Francis Baylies did not arrive in Buenos Aires until June 9th 1832 is suggestive but open to various interpretations.

From what I have been able to determine, Baylies was a Massachusetts political lawyer, some time journalist

and author of no particular repute. Whatever his qualifications, he certainly was anything but a diplomat. He presented his credentials on the 15th of June and, from what followed, it seems evident that his mission was not of enquiry, but that his instructions were rather more in consonance with the natural character of "Old Hickory". From Baylies' subsequent activities, and his delayed arrival, it seems entirely probable that the British had used the interim to influence the American government to promote their claims. On the 20th of June Baylies opened fire with his first note to the United Provinces government, the introduction of which made clear the real nature of his mission, reading as follows:

"The undersigned, Business Chargé of the United States of America, before the Government of Buenos Aires, has the honour to inform His Excellency the Minister of Grace and Justice (who was Manual Vicente Maza), provisionally in charge of the Department of Foreign Relations, that he had been ordered to call the attention of that Government to certain procedures of Don Luis Vernet, who pretends, by virtue of a decree of that Government, dated June 10th 1829, to be Civil and Military Governor of the Malvinas Islands".

Mr. Baylies then went on to recapitulate all the allegations advanced by Slocum in far from diplomatic language. Insofar as his comments with regard

to Vernet are concerned, whatever his conduct, or Baylies' opinion as to the legality of his title or function, he was nevertheless a ranking public official within the Government before which Baylies was accredited. An excerpt from the document, with reference to the American seal hunters, reads as follows: "Not content with depriving them of their possessions and treating them as slaves, Vernet had subjected them to the greatest measure of humiliation, reducing these American citizens to a degree of moral debasement as low as his own, etc..."

Minister Maza acknowledged receipt with an expression of surprise at the lack of diplomatic bearing.

The following day the Massachusetts lawyer again went into action, demanding from the Minister an immediate declaration as to whether the Government of Buenos Aires still persisted in attributing to itself territorial rights over the Malvinas Islands, despite the fact that the United States had denied them. After two weeks without reply, Baylies presented a long, disjointed history, reviewing the old Anglo-Spanish dispute of 1771, and transcribing verbatim the protest which the British Minister Woodbine Parish had presented on the occasion of the creation of the post of Military and Naval Commander of the Malvinas Islands, (see page 22 paragraph 1) to which post Vernet was immediately appointed, and inferring the more valid sovereignty of Great Britain.

Minister Maza had had enough. He prepared a long

missive, directed to the American Department of State in Washington, refusing to recognize any American right of intervention in the question of sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands, that the ravages perpetrated by Duncan and the "Lexington", if they had been done under order of his superiors, was nothing less than violation of National sovereignty, equivalent to an act of war committed in time of peace, incompatible with civilized national behaviour; and if committed without official order, then a crime warranting Court Martial of the perpetrator (Duncan). The communication ended by the formal assurance that none of the notes presented by Baylies would be accorded any attention whatsoever, until the claims of the Government of the United Provinces of Buenos Aires regarding indemnification for the invasion of their territory as well as the ruination of their colony at Puerto Soledad by the piratical acts of Duncan in command of the "Lexington", were resolved.

On receipt of this note Baylies had no alternative but to ask for his passports, but that did not deter him from a final affront, in the form of attempting to leave, as head of the American Legation, the former Consul George Slocum, whose exequatur had been rescinded by the Buenos Aires Government on the 14th of February 1832, after his statement of denial of its territorial rights over the Malvinas and Tierra del Fuego, and the attack on Puerto Soledad by the "Lexington". He had however, not left the country,

but simply taken refuge in the Legation premises while Baylies' aggressive, hostile and partisan (to Great Britain) manifestations were being presented. To this there could be only one reaction from the Argentine Minister to wit, that Mr. Slocum was an unauthorized alien refugee in the American Legation, and could only be considered as a deliquent. Both Slocum and Baylies embarked for home on the corvette "Warren" on the 21st of September 1832.

There is considerable evidence of collaboration and probably collusion between Slocum, Baylies and the British Minister Henry S. Fox, who had succeeded Woodbine Parish in October 1831,during the period immediately before, and for a considerable time after, the despoilment of Puerto Soledad. It is inconceivable that the British should have moved to take forcible possession of the Malvinas Islands, as they did, just over three months after the departure of Slocum and Baylies from Buenos Aires, without first having extended conversations with Washington, in view of their intention to violate the Monroe Doctrine. Very apparently such was the case, and the Americans, with their characteristic naivete credulously accepted the usual British unilateral, partisan and infinitely distorted presentation in support of their territorial claims to the Malvinas Islands. If, as appears perfectly plausible, the entire "Lexington" episode was, in fact, long term, premeditated, connivance with the British

in preparation for their imminent forceful occupation, the American participation then becomes collusion. In addition to recalling Commander Duncan's declaration on leaving Puerto Soledad, that it had become "open territory", also refer to Annex I, lines 27 to 32. This is a prime example of misleading and inventive composition, implying active British intervention in the "Lexington" incident, and strongly suggesting collusion with the United States. The statement (line 30), "the British flag was once more hoisted at Port Luis in 1833", is outright prevarication. The British flag had never flown over any establishment of the Malvinas Islands except Port Egmont.

Whether or not the action of the "Lexington" was collusive, it is absolutely certain that the British did receive from Washington a commitment of benevolent complacency and non-intervention on the part of the American government, towards any action they might choose to take regarding the occupation of the Malvinas Islands. That the American government should take such a position within 17 years of the burning of their capital city by the British is astonishing; but political memories are short.

To put finis to the repercussions resulting from the "Lexington" incident, the Governor of the United Provinces of the River Plate of course lodged an immediate protest, which either fell on deaf ears, or received evasive and not always diplomatic replies. It wasn't until the 4th of December 1841 in response to a petition presented by the Argentine,

recently arrived, Plenipotentiary Minister in Washington, Carlos de Alvear, dated the 21st of March 1839, (a year and a half before), that Secretary of State Daniel Webster gave the first concise expression of the American position on the matter, expressing the following strange thesis: "That the investigation of the acts committed by Captain Duncan, being enmeshed in a controversy regarding sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands, necessitated the suspension of all examination of the Argentine claim, pending solution of that controversy; the traditional policy of the United States, prohibits any preliminary measures which might imply a favourable or contrary attitude toward one of the parties".

Now let us briefly examine this extraordinary statement by evolving a hypothetical parallel case. Assume that a residence is under litigation of a hereditary nature, but occupied by one of the two contestants. A vandal, whose identity is known to both parties, invades the premises, breaks the locks off the doors, ravages the home and surroundings, and tacks up a notice declaring the property open to occupation for all and sundry. The erstwhile occupier of the house appears before the Justice of Peace demanding that the marauder be subjected to due process of Law, the other litigant in the meanwhile having taken possession of the property. The Justice of Peace, thereupon, hands down a decision that the court cannot act until the inheritance dispute is resolved.

Should such a dictum exist, in fact, in American Law, every piece of American property, where ownership is under litigation, would be immediately subject to criminal attack. That this juridically indefensible position should have been taken by one of America's historically revered statesmen, is at the very least, surprising. He eventually autocratically terminated official communications and all further discussion of the subject with Ambassador Alvear with these intransigent words "This is the resolution of the American Government; communicate it to yours".

With regard to the second part of the Webster ruling be obviously had not reviewed the facts, as the record would immediately have shown that the official acts of Duncan, as instigated by Slocum, as well as the documented communications to the government of the United Provinces of the River Plate by the latter, and subsequently by Baylies, were far from impartial, and, in fact, highly instrumental in facilitating the British action of occupation. There is still further history subsequent to the "Lexington" event, as follows:

Captain Davison of the "Harriet", which eventually was declared "Lawful Prize" by the Buenos Aires court, introduced an action before the Federal Court of Massachusetts claiming compensation for the loss of the ship, of which he was the owner. Since the suit was initiated before a Federal Court the defendent was evidently the American Government, the

inference being that the "Lexington" should have forcibly released his vessel while in River Plate waters. The dictate of the Court was the following: "Where an officer of the Navy, without instructions from his Government, seized property in the Falkland Islands, claimed by citizens of the United States, which it was alleged, had been piratically taken by a person pretending to be the Governor of the Islands, it was held, that such officer had no right, without express direction from his Government, to enter the territoriality of a country at peace with the United States and seize property found there, claimed by citizens of the United States. Application for redress should have been made to the judicial Tribunals of the country". Reference Francis Wharton, a Digest of the International Law, second edition, I, page 444. At first reading this judgement may seem confusing, until it is aligned with the fact that Duncan actually entered Port Soledad and recovered Davison's seal skins, supposedly "piratically taken", but apparently that he dared not to subsequently enter the well defended port of Buenos Aires to seize the "Harriet". Evidently the Court is disclaiming the territoriality of the United Provinces of the River Plate over the Malvinas Islands, based on Slocum's and Baylies' statements to that effect. Since it is virtually impossible that Slocum had any specific authority from the American government to make such a statement (see page 29), the dictum of the Court in that case, would also condemn Duncan's action in the Malvinas. The incursion of the

"Lexington" would thus become an unauthorized act of war against a country at peace with the United States, and Commander Duncan should have been subjected to Court Martial. It also would justify the Argentine claim for indemnification.

In the Vernet family file there appears a letter, directed to him on the 18th of October 1840, by the American Minister in Buenos Aires, William H. Harris, in which he declares that he had no compunction in stating that Vernet was entitled to equitable compensation for the damage to his personal property, caused by a naval incursion of the United States corvette "Lexington" commanded by Captain Silas Duncan. Whether or not such compensation was ever paid, I am not aware, but the interpretation is obvious. An official of the United States government was willing to consider compensation to Luis Vernet, the private citizen, but not to the country which Luis Vernet served as a duly installed governing officer.

In his message to Congress of December 1885, President Grover Cleveland saw fit to reply indirectly to an Argentine renewal of its claim in the following words: "The Argentine government has revived the long dormant question of the Falkland Islands, by claiming from the United Stated indemnity for their loss, attributed to the action of the commander of the sloop of war "Lexington", in breaking up a piratical colony on those islands

in 1831, and their subsequent occupation by Great Britain. In view of the ample justification for the act of the "Lexington", and the derelect condition of the islands, before and after, their alleged occupation by the Argentine colonists, this Government considers the claim as wholly groundless". It is evident that President Cleveland was either ignorant of the facts, or had been misinformed by his Secretary of State Thomas Bayard, but in either event the statement is erroneous. Secretary of State Bayard, incidentally, later became the American Ambassador in London, but was removed from that position for extreme anglophilia. Here is another area in which Mr. Reagan can do some fence mending, if he is sincere in his wishes to recover respect for the United States in Latin America.

The British Occupation of the Malvinas Islands

Into the moral, administrative and defensive vacuum created by the deprivations of the "Lexington" stepped the British, and forceably ejected the small naval garrison under the command of Jose Maria Pinedo, Captain of the Argentine frigate "Sarandi", from Puerto Soledad the 3rd of January 1833. The ground had been prepared physically by the previous American incursion, and diplomatically by British representation in Washington.

This action, of course, resulted in a protest of the United Provinces of the River Plate in London

by Argentine Ambassador Moreno, to which the British Head of the Foreign Office, Lord Palmerston condescended to reply, in part as follows: "Those sovereign rights were founded upon the original discovery and subsequent occupation of those islands, had acquired an additional sanction from the fact that H.C.M. (His Catholic Majesty of Spain) had restored the British settlement which had been forcibly taken possession of by a Spanish force in the year 1771" (sic)

"The claim of Great Britain to the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands,having been unequivocally asserted and maintained during those discussions with Spain in 1770 and 1771, which nearly led to a war between the two countries, having esteemed it proper to put an end to those discussions by restoring to H.M. (His Britannic Majesty) the places (plural in error) from which British subjects had been expelled, the government of the United Provinces could not reasonably have anticipated that the British Government would permit any other state to exercise a right, as derived from Spain, which Great Britain had denied to Spain herself, and this consideration alone would have justified H.M. government in declining to enter into any further explanation upon a question which, upwards of a century ago, (? 62 years is not a century) was so notoriously and decisively adjusted with another government, more immediately concerned".

The arbitrary note, on which Lord Palmerston's

statement ends, coming as it does from a member of the British elite, immediately raises doubts as to its veracity. For an account of the events of 1771-1772 see pages 11 - 16.

With regard to the first paragraph, as has already been determined, the British missed making the original discovery by some 75 years (see pages 6 - 8) nor were they the first to occupy the islands (see pages 9 - 10), and at no time were they sole occupants. Furthermore, there is no record of their having made any claims before their co-occupants with regard to their pretended sovereign rights, either to the original French nor to the later Spanish authorities on the islands, nor to their respective governments.

The second paragraph deserves closer scrutiny since it states a position often repeated by future British government officials, and Julius Goebels Jr. in his thesis "The Struggle for the Falkland Islands" considers the negotiations of 1770-1771, which resulted in the eventual temporary reoccupation by the British at Port Egmont, together with Argentine rights of sovereignty by inheritance from Spain, as the two fundamental points which form the key to the entire dispute.

An appendix to Paul Groussac's book "Les Isles Malouines" reproduces translations of State Papers involving exchanges between Lords Weymouth, British

Head of the Foreign Office and Rochford, to the British Attache before the French court Mr. James Harris including one addressed directly by Weymouth to the Spanish Minister Grimaldi. An examination of these interchanges of documents reveals that the subjects under dispute were:

1. - Redress for the affront to the dignity of the British crown due to the expulsion of the British from Port Egmont.

2. - A formal statement to the British Crown that Governor Bucareli had not acted under specific orders from the Spanish Crown.

3. - That Governor Bucareli be severely reprimanded for his unwarranted action (in fact he was removed from office).

4. - That Captain Anthony Hawkins be reprimanded for his repeated menaces towards Spanish shipping.

All of these negotiations were carried out with the utmost formal courtesy, with repeated assurances on the part of both governments of their desire to avoid armed conflict. The only references to sovereignty were statements on the part of the Spanish, that the British had long been aware of their disapproval of the British presence at Fort Egmont, and the reiteration that any ac-

ceptable arrangements which might be made would not affect "His Catholic Majesty's" rights over the islands.

The final arrangements appear on page 12, paragraph 2, which specifically establish that prior rights of sovereignty over the islands were not affected. I understand that the British allege that their simple acknowledgement of receipt of the convention presented by the Prince of Masserano, did not constitute acceptance of its terms. The fact that they did proceed to reoccupy Fort Egmont under the conditions established would indicate the contrary. The crucial point is that the use by Palmerston of the words "unequivocally asserted and maintained" referring to the British claims to sovereignty during the discussions in 1770-1771 is gross exaggeration. It appears that the Spanish asserted their own claim even more vigorously, and the final agreement confirms it.

With regard to the other topic on which Britain has placed so much emphasis over the years regarding Argentine sovereignty over the Malvinas by right of inheritance from Spain, this appears again to be purely British inventive pompous nonsense. Let us look at the facts:

1. - That the Malvinas Islands geophysically form part of the Patagonean coastal shelf is unquestionable.

2. - After the retirement of the British from Port Egmont in 1774 there was a continual succession of Spanish governors at Puerto Soledad until 1811, a total of 37 years, without any British effort to evict them, or protestations to the Spanish government. The fact that the British made four attempts to invade the mainland of the Spanish colonies of the River Plate, two of them during the post evacuation of Egmont period, would indicate that they also questioned Spanish authority over the mainland. It would have been more logical had they attacked the Malvinas, but the islands during 1806 and 1807 when the attacks were made, were not strategically important to them.

All of this would indicate that Argentina has no rights by inheritance of sovereignty from Spain over Patagonia or the rest of its territory either, and since the Viceroyalty of Spain at the time of the two latter of the British attacks, included Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay, under this British interpretation, their sovereignty over their territories are likewise not recognized by the British.

That Argentina has continually pressed its claims before the British for the restitution of their islands under the format of resolution 1514 of the United Nations, is common knowledge, and the British reactions have already been referred to

at the foot of page 2. The passage by the United Nations General Assembly of resolutions 2065 and 3160, have merely resulted in vaguely worded British communicative notes,directed to the United Nations,that progress was being made and that a solution could be expected shortly. The last of these was presented in 1974. In the interim,the British have travelled the members of the Directorate of the Falkland Islands Company to the Patagonean ports adjacent to the Malvinas Islands, supposedly with a view to determining their adequacy as ports of supply. The reaction, as might be expected, as expressed by Mr. M.C. Waldron, president of the Falkland Islands Company, was completely negative. Incidently Mr. Waldron personally owns a large farm in mainland Argentina, "El Condor", and also 173,000 acres on the Western Malvinas Island.

The Falkland Islands Company was chartered by the British to operate on the Malvinas in 1851. As any student of British history is aware, they have often used such instruments to effect commercial penetration and colonization, in various areas of the world, resulting inexorably in annexation, i.e., The Virginia Company (North and South), The Hudson Bay Company and the nefarious British East India Company.

The Argentines in the same interim, in an effort to demonstrate to the colonists the benefits which

Argentine sovereignty would represent in the development of the islands as a whole, first replaced the aging supply ship "Darwin", which had made monthly sojourns to the port of Montevideo carrying passengers and supplies, with a modern vessel. They built the first airport, and instituted a weekly air service to the Malvinas from the Patagonean port of Comodoro Rivadavia. They installed satellite communications equipment, putting the Malvinas colonials in telephone contact with the rest of the world. The Argentine National oil company initiated the distribution of bottled gas in Port Darwin, whose inhabitants could then dispense with their peat burning stoves and fireplaces.

The latest delaying tactic on the part of the British is the insistence that the islanders, numbering 1800, about 20% being British subjects, should have the privilege of self-determination with regard to their future status. This is rather anomalous in view of the fact that the British had just arbitrarily removed this privilege from many of the inhabitants by virtue of their British Colonial Nationality Act of 1981.

I am told another 400 or 500 are so called "contract personnel", who are merely working temporarily on the islands, in replacement of emigrants who have left in search of better opportunities elsewhere, many to mainland Argentina. What is

under discussion, therefore, is the future of less than 400 Britishers. In this regard it must be pointed out that the British, on taking possession of the Malvinas in 1833, accorded the Argentine inhabitants no options whatsoever. The local press has reported that President Reagan expressed himself as being in agreement with the British view point on the subject of self-determination by the islanders. It would seem to me that, before making such a statement, it would have been more appropriate to examine the rights of the British to have colonized the islands in the first place. If such arbitrary determinations are to be made with regard to the rights of British subjects inhabiting those islands, which, in all right, dating from the year 1811, is Argentine sovereign territory, then the Argentine Republic, conversely, has the unquestionable right of determination over the destiny of some 17000 British citizens living on the Argentine mainland. Put in another way, if Argentine sovereignty is not considered by the British as a sufficient guarantee for the security and well being of British subjects on the Malvinas Islands, Argentina could very justifiably take the attitude that there was no reason to extend the hospitality and security of their sovereignty to British subjects, living in their country by choice. It should cause no surprise, therefore, if the Argentine Republic were to give these 17000 British subjects, living within

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their territory six months to dispose of their local assets,and arbitrarily cancel their resident visas.

Insofar as British contributions to the advancement of the economy of the Malvinas Islands, after their forceable occupation in 1833 is concerned, they did erect certain port installations, since the strategic considerations which instigated their action, involved a supply base for shipping in connection with their trading interests in the South Pacific. Regular calls were made by vessels engaged in this activity, which improved the islands' communications with the outside world. With the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 however, this activity, of course, immediately dwindled and the Falkland Islands lost all strategic value. The entire commercial activity was in the hands of the Falkland Islands Company, who also owned about one third of the productive land area. The only produce of the islands is wool from some 600,000 sheep being run on Falklands Islands Company holdings, and private farms. There is no internal telephone or telegraph communications system, education is sporadic, through direct visits of travelling school teachers, supplemented by communication via single side band, high frequency,transcievers owned and operated by the individual farms. There is not a mile of all weather road outside of the town of Port Stanley. Had any adequate road network been constructed, the sheep population could easily have been increased to 3,000,000. Medical services, until the advent

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of the Argentine air service in 1971, consisted of a six bed hospital attended by two doctors, who gave attention by radio to the outlying farms, and in serious cases travelled to the hinterland generally by sea. After 1971 serious medical cases were transported to Port Darwin, and hence by air to Argentina for hospitalization.

The Argentine reoccupation of April 2nd 1982, the resultant action within the United Nations and the reaction of the United States.

As is common knowledge on April 2nd 1982, Argentina, having finally decided that further negotiation with the British over the Malvinas Islands could only result in continued evasive and dilatory tactics, landed on the islands in force, which eventually grew to 10,000 officers and men, complete with armament, transport vehicles, etc. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher immediately reacted to assemble counter action within the United Nations and the European Economic Community, successfully securing within the Security Council of the former, a vote of censure and the declaration of Argentina as an "aggressor nation", and within the latter, the application of economic trade sanctions.

At this point I intend to digress somewhat and examine the United Nations as an entity, within the concept of its supposed function of maintaining peace amongst its members, at the same time guaranteeing their security. On its formation, in the

euforia of victory by the allies in World War II, and the final approbation of its statutory format, the assumption seems to have been adopted that the wheels of history would grind to a halt in 1945, and be restarted, thus perpetuating any existing inequities and injustices by converting them into a status quo. This is not only fallacious - it is pure fantasy! To automatically brand any violator of this status quo as an aggressor nation, without the slightest discriminatory examination of the relevant historical, and immediately preceding, causative events, is functionally illogical, and can only propagate the promotion of armed conflict. This is the first lesson which can be learned from the recent tragic conflict in the Malvinas Islands.

In the case in question, the United Nations General Assembly first passed a resolution recommending the termination of colonialism, and in 1965 a further resolution, identifying specifically the Malvinas Islands dispute between Great Britain and Argentina, and calling for the initiation of definitive negotiations without delay. The Argentines made concerted efforts, but no progress was made primarily due to the negative interference, in behalf of the interests of the Falkland Islands Company, within the British Parliament, until 1974. In the meanwhile, as we have seen, the Argentines had done much to increase communications both by air and by sea. The United Nations General Assembly again acts, passing resolution 3160, and eight more frustrating, infructuous years go by, this time

the stumbling block being the British demand that the Malvinas Islanders be allowed to determine their own destiny by popular vote. Obviously such a procedure, after 150 years under British colonial rule, is neither a reasonable nor practical approach to the solution of sovereignty, and could only lead to a determination favourable to the British, whereas all of the relevant history negates British claims.

It is evident, therefore, that the United Nations is impotent to secure peaceable solutions to territorial disputes dating back to before its inception, and the options open to the Security Council are so circumscribed, that it is unable to exercise any discretionary action whatever. Members can vote aye, nay or abstain on a proposed resolution, and in the case of permanent members a "nay" vote constitutes a veto.

With regard to Alexander Haig's so called "peace missions", they can hardly be qualified as such, as he had no power to negotiate, but merely to impose British terms of immediate withdrawal by the Argentines. On his second mission, he suggested that they acquiesce to the British demands until December 1982, at which time discussions could be entered into to definitely establish the future status of the Malvinas Islands. The Argentines would have accepted such a proposal, provided that some guarantee was given that, regardless of any interim administration which might be set up, the pre-established and agreed objective would be Argentine sovereignty, within some reasonable time

period. This Haig was unable to give, but the question arises as to what was so strategic about December, 1982.

At this point in time it appears fairly evident that the Americans were involved in the termination of the deployment of the "Pershing II" and the so called "Cruise Missile" in the British Isles, which had been approved by the Thatcher government, but was under strong opposition by the liberal and labour factors in the British Parliament. Hence the necessity, from the American point of view, that the tenuous Thatcher government remain in power, and an armed conflict with Argentina was the ideal diversion to deflect public and political attention from the missile controversy, and unite the British nation behind the war effort. Any armed conflict,with any other country,would have served the purpose just as well. It thus appears that Argentina, by virtue of having, by force, taken possession of something which was unquestionably its own, found itself embroiled in a perfectly preventable war with Britain,due to a strategic political consideration involving that country and the United States, completely unconnected with the matter inhand. The inflexibility of action,which the statutes of procedure of the United Nations impose on the Security Council, precluded it from taking cognizance of this extenuating circumstance.

A little reflection will disclose that the limited

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procedures available to the Council are highly favourable to the interests of expansionist or colonialist nations, and the representatives of such nations, particularly Britain and Russia, present at the "Yalta Conferences" and the later "San Francisco Conferences" were instrumental in creating this situation.

For Argentina to attempt to negotiate a territorial dispute with a notoriously supercilious and arrogant Great Britain, sitting as a permanent member in the Security Council, armed with the arbitrary power of veto, and headed by a political megalomaniac such as Margaret Thatcher, was obviously futile. After 17 frustrating years, faced with political instability, the unpopular Argentine government acted not knowing of the unassociated strategic interest which made American support of Britain inevitable despite a commitment to the OAS.

The cease fire proposal put before the Security Council on June 4th, vetoed by Britain and the United States, merely bears out the foregoing. It suited Thatcher for the war to continue. The subsequent statement by Haig, disclosing a last minute change of decision by the United States in favour of abstention, but communicated through channels in Washington instead of direct to New York for procedural reasons, is so clumsy that I doubt if anybody found it credible. In Latin America it was construed as an effort to assuage

its already highly intense resentment towards the United States. "Duplicitous", sniffed the British, blissfully unaware that they were expressing one of their own fundamental characteristics.

In conclusion, the intervention of the United Nations in the Malvinas Islands conflict can only by characterized as a perpetuation of the ageless cliches "Might makes right" and "Possession is 9 points of the Law". If the possessor happens to be a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, the 9 points become 10.

During the embryonic stages of the formation of the United Nations, many of the iniquities and partialities reflected in the proposed Statutes of Procedure were noted by both Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman. The former, during the Yalta Conference, made some attempt to correct them, particularly the unilateral power of absolute veto by the permanent members of the Security Council, and the limitations placed on its discretionary powers. Winston Churchill in these discussions remained virtually on the sidelines while Stalin negotiated with Roosevelt. Roosevelt was completely out-manoeuvered by the wily Russian and Truman threatened to withdraw from the San Francisco Conference, which as things turned out, perhaps the United States might better have done. While some slight variations in wording took

place, nothing very substanial was changed. As a result the United Nations has disclosed itself completely inadequate to achieve the objectives for which it was created.

Conclusion

To conclude this thesis, insofar as the recent conflict itself is concerned, there is little that need be said, as the results are common knowledge. There would appear to be some question as to the legality of the sinking, by a British atomic submarine, of the ancient cruiser "General Belgrano", 35 miles outside of the combat zone determined by the British themselves, and which accounted for more than half of the entire Argentine losses in manpower. Only history will eventually determine the details of the military action, as, up to now, what has appeared in the press emanating from both sides is grotesquely distorted.

British Foreign Office Minister Cranley Onslow, on leaving the Brazilian capital city of Brasilia, in response to a newspaper reporter's query as to the possibility of future negotiations with Argentina over the Malvinas Islands, replied "Negotiate what, why, and with whom". From this it would appear that Britain considers the dispute definitely terminated, with their second forceful occupation of Argentine territory.

The recent occupation of the Malvinas Islands, in

my estimation, completes a unique sequence of events in world history. On two separate occasions, with an interim of 150 years, the same world power has invaded and occupied the same foreign territory, in both cases with the benevolent complaisance, if not connivance, and the moral and material support of the United States. It is a virtual certainty that Great Britain would not have proceeded to make either of these incursions without that support. It therefore seems to me that the United States must shoulder a grave responsibility with regard to these events, and should therefore take the initiative in instigating a thorough investigation into the British claims of sovereignty, as related to modern concepts of international law (See Pages 3 and 4).

The reader, at this point, may have gained the impression that I am somehow prejudiced against the United States with regard to the Malvinas Islands question. This is the very antithesis of the truth. That I suffer from anglomania I will not deny. This, however, is discriminatory in nature, as on my various visits to Great Britain I have thoroughly enjoyed my contacts with the public in general. However, as can't be denied, there is a very pronounced line of demarcation between "a commoner", and the elite so called "upper crust nobility", (not including royalty), evolved over centuries, whose attitude of imperious superiority, I am sure, make my sentiments far from unique. When involved in government, this elite class, over the centuries have developed an apparently innate

affinity with surreptition, connivance, ambiguity and unscrupulous distortion of fact, for political or territorial gain.

My affection towards my, and my parent's,native country has not been affected in the slightest by my change in nationality. I must admit that my fundamental beliefs in truth, honesty, integrity and justice, which I have always equated with those of the American people and Nation, have been somewhat disturbed by the disclosures which my research into the history of the two British occupations of the Malvinas Islands, and the American participation in them, has apparently revealed.

The "Lexington incident", and the attitude taken by the United States on the various occasions mentioned in this study with regard to the Argentine claims for compensation, are not compatible with my interpretation of truth and justice. If, on investigation, the American position is shown to be escapist in nature, as it would appear, I then believe, even at this late date, that action of some kind is indicated. Matters would be more serious if an investigation of old naval and Presidential records should show that the "Lexington" acted under specific instructions from Washington, indicating connivance with the British, after having been mislead into believing their trumped up claims to sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands.

The Present Strategic Importance of the Malvinas Islands.

Commercial

Outside of sheep raising, there are two potential industries which could be developed on the Malvinas Islands. The surrounding waters abound with krill, a shrimp-like crustacean which, being the natural food of the blue and sperm whales whose numbers are now sadly decimated, have proliferated enormously. High in protein, krill processing could result in a highly profitable source of human and animal alimentation.

Kelp, an algae, is processable into a number of valuable industrial and other raw materials and components. It also has the advantage of being virtually inexhaustible due to its rapid regrowth, thus replacing harvesting from year to year.

Why didn't the British make some effort to develop these resources during the last 150 years?

No signs of petroleum have been discovered on the Malvinas Islands themselves, but there seems to be no doubt that there are deposits on the continental shelf to the West and South West, as determined by the Shackleton Expedition, bitterly opposed and resented by Argentina. However, as the Shackleton study points out, any exploitation would be virtually

impossible without support for the supply of derrick platforms from bases on the Argentine mainland. At one point in the interminable Argentine-British negotiations over sovereignty, conversations were taking place regarding eventual mutual exploitation of hydrocarbon resources in the Malvinas area which, of course are now indefinitely terminated. With a hostile Argentina in such close proximity, it is doubtful whether any petroleum producing combine would risk the investment required to prospect and drill in such meteorologically adverse conditions.

Military

There has been much talk regarding a supposed strategic base to be placed on the Malvinas Islands by joint American and British military collaboration. Such a project would have been infinitely more feasible with the Malvinas Islands under Argentine nationality, as Ex-President Galtieri was avidly pro American after heading an Argentine military mission to the United States in 1981. The Argentines will, from now on, be continually hostile to any British presence on those islands, whether or not jointly with the United States, which might well result in some type of counteracting Argentine collaboration with the Russians, who are their present major export customer. Not being knowledgeable in long term military strategy, nor present day nuclear armament, I can only assume that such a base would be installed in the realization that a primary objective, in any impending nuclear conflict, would

be the disabling of the Panama Canal. It would unquestionably be put out of commission in short order, and the Cape Horn route would once again become the only access to the South Pacific, from the Atlantic ocean. In that case the Malvinas Islands would indeed be an invaluable base of operations, with secondary strategic value in dominating the entire Antarctic area, the Cape of Good Hope and the western coast of Africa. At the present time the Russians are busily engaged in creating a belt of domination diagonally across Africa, from South West to North East, with the collaboration of their Cuban connection.

Since World War II, the increasing influence of blocs, formed by the leading powers and emerging countries, in recent world history, have become evident.

O.P.E.C.

This organization of the petroleum exporting countries, it must be admitted, was engendered in retaliation against exploitive practices by the large petroleum producing and processing multinational combines. The result has been over-compensation, which, according to many top executive Americans to whom I have spoken, has been one of the main causes of inflation in the United States. Increases in prices, and the indices of the cost of living in the United States, have undoubtedly been partially caused by O.P.E.C. activities, but are by no means synonymous with inflation, which arises

from inefficiencies in the internal national economy. The O.P.E.C. manipulation of petroleum prices is merely monopolistic banditry to combat which the petroleum consuming societies have not been able to devise a formula, despite the fact that they are the suppliers of essential imports of the O.P.E.C. countries.

E.E.C.

The European Economic Community, like O.P.E.C. is a group of nations dedicated to the protection of the economic interests of its member countries, through the application of communal policies destined to secure advantageous conditions of trade with the outside world. As we have seen, in recent years, the E.E.C. has made serious encroachments into the American domestic market with the products of their, often subsidized, basic industries.

The Russian Bloc

Russia, Siberia and the group of Eastern European countries, which fell under the direct domination of the Soviet Union, by virtue of its unscrupulous violation of the principles laid down at the Yalta conferences, and which became progressively evident, and finally inequivocably confirmed at the Potsdam conference, is maintained exclusively by force. Both Churchill and Roosevelt became aware of the

Russian intentions before the termination of the war in Europe, which resulted in a succession of abrasive communications between Roosevelt and Stalin, and the recommendation by Churchill that allied armies continue their advance to the East, beyond the demarcation point established at Yalta. This aggressive position resulted in his being promptly voted out of office by a war weary British public, who saw the possibility of continued armed conflict against the Russians. To my certain knowledge the recommendation was made to the U.S. Department of State, between the time of the Potsdam conference and the final armistice with Japan, that the Iron Curtain, which was already in evidence, be made a two-way barrier.
This would have resulted in no diplomatic, commercial or travel interchange between Russia and its erstwhile allies, and would have prevented the formation of the vast, subversive spy network, which it proceeded to organize under the direction of their embassies and consulates. There likewise would have been no representation of Russia or its satellite nations within the United Nations.

In my opinion, had this recommendation been followed, Russian acquisition of atomic and space technology, if not prevented entirely, would have been very much delayed, and Russia would not be the military menace that it is today. Even at the present time, could any degree of unison be achieved between the nations of the free world, the Russian threat could be controlled. Their absolute dependence on the importation of food makes them entirely

vulnerable to any strategically oriented combination of countries which include the United States, Canada, Australia and Argentina.

The Russian political ideology is such that, I am convinced, any attempt to negotiate with the Soviet Union is entirely unrealistic. Vladimir Lefebvre, a former Soviet researcher in military psychology, and at present a mathematical psychologist at the University of California at Irvine, has just completed a book which demonstrates this fact. Essentially it points out, that within the Russian mentality "It is ethically correct to compromise with evil as a means to a good end, but it is wrong to compromise with opponents in a confrontation". In other words, no treaty, agreement, or commitment by the Russians is inviolable, in their eyes, in attaining a desirable ultimate objective. This of course is not only intolerable, but completely inimical to the ethical standards of the Western world.

A corner stone of the Russian foreign policy is, precisely, that a bloc composed of the capitalist countries of the free world, each primarily concerned with its own pursuit of material profit, is an impossibility. That this seems to be true is borne out by the complete indifference accorded to the protestations of the United States toward Great Britain, West Germany and France, regarding their insistence on continuing the supply of high technology to the Russians.

N.A.T.O.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a purely military alliance,designed to assure the mutual security from military attack of its signators. As I see it, in practice,it is merely a group of the European Western nations huddling under the protective umbrella of the United States, which is expected to carry the major financial and armament responsibilities. Recent efforts by the United States to get collaboration from its European allies in strategic and economic programs, directed against the nation which is recognized by all as the immediate potential enemy, namely Russia, (the projected Russian gas supply pipe line to Western Europe -the continued sale by Western European nations of high technology to the Russians themselves, and resistance to the deployment of atomic weapons within their territories), have not only failed, but been subjected to determined opposition. At the same time these same Western European nations combine to commercially infiltrate the American domestic market. In the event of an individual Russian atomic attack on the United States, I personally doubt its European allies would move to counterattack, despite their Treaty obligations to do so. In order to get cooperation from the Western European nations in N.A.T.O. the United States holds the ace of trumps. The mere threat of withdrawal, on its part,would throw those nations into a pandemonium of consternation.

O.A.S.

The Organization of American States is the grouping of virtually all Western Hemisphere nations for the purpose of mutual defense, economic and strategic cooperation, etc., but has never been molded into an effective organization with world wide impact.

Had the Monroe Doctrine been amplified to also exclude foreign political ideologies as well as territorial acquisitions, at the time of the formation of the O.A.S., it would have received enthusiastic support from the member countries who are, in overwhelming majority, anti-communist, and adherents to democratic forms of government. If this strategy had been adopted, it is doubtful if we would today, be faced with a Russian dominated Cuba off our coast, several additional islands in the Caribbean Sea under far left governments, and communist inspired and supported uprisings in Central America.

Here was the chance for the United States to take a major role in forming a Western Hemisphere cohesive bloc of developing countries, instead of which it treated its neighbors to the South with varying degrees of bare tolerance and, at times, disaffection. Whatever chance there may have been for the United States of America to take its predestined, dominant position in the O.A.S., it has recently succeeded in effectively pulverizing.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Many of the quotations are translated from Spanish, the source of which are in turn translations into Spanish from a third language and thus may not be literal.

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Annex I

Excerpt from the Encyclopedia Britannica, Edition XI, published in 1910.

The Falkland Islands were first seen by Davis in the year 1592 and Sir Richard Hawkins sailed along their North shore in 1594.

The claims of Amerigo Vespucci to a previous discovery are doubtful. In 1598 Sebald De Wert, a Dutchman,visited them, and called them the Sebald Islands, a name which they bear on some Dutch maps. Captain Strong sailed through between the two principal islands in 1690, landed upon one of them, and called the passage Falkland Sound, and from this the group afterwards took its name. In 1764 the French explorer De Bougainville took possession of the islands on behalf of his country, and established a colony at Port Louis on Berkeley Sound. But in 1767 France ceeded the islands to Spain, De Bougainville being employed as intermediary. Meanwhile in 1765 Commodore Byron had taken possession on the part of England on the grounds of prior discovery, and had formed a settlement at Port Egmont on the small island of Saunders. The Spanish and English remained in ignorance, real or assumed, of each other's presence until 1769-1770, when Byron's action was nearly the cause of a war between England and Spain, both countries having armed fleets to contest the barren sovereignty. In 1771, however, Spain yielded the islands to Great Britain by convention. As they had not been actually colonized by England, the Republic of Buenos Aires claimed the group in 1820, and subsequently entered into a dispute with the United States of America concerning the rights to the products of these islands. On the representations of Great Britain the Buenosaireans withdrew, and the British Flag was once more hoisted at Port Louis in 1833, and since that time the Falkland Islands have been a regular British colony.

In 1845 Mr. S. Lafone, a wealthy cattle and hide merchant on the River Plate, obtained from government a grant of the southern portion of the island, a peninsula 600,000 acres in extent, and possession of all the wild cattle on the island for a period of six years, for a payment of L/10,000 down and L/20,000 in ten years from January 1, 1852. In 1851 Mr. Lafone's interest in Lafonia, as the peninsula came to be called, was purchased for L/30,000 by the Falkland Islands Company, which had been incorporated by charter in the same year.

Annex II

Historical excerpt from the text article on Falkland Islands per Encyclopedia Britannica, Edition XIV , published in 1936.

The Falkland Islands were first seen by Davis in the year 1591 and Sir Richard Hawkins sailed along their North shore in 1594. The claims of Americo Vespucci to a previous discovery are doubtful. In 1598 Sebald De Wert, a Dutchman, visited them and called them the Sebald Islands, a name which they bear on some Dutch maps. Captain Strong sailed through between the two principal islands in 1690, landed upon one of them, and called the passage Falkland Sound, and from this the group afterwards took it's English name. In 1764 the French explorer De Bougainville took possession of the islands on behalf of his country, and established a colony at Port Louis on Berkely Sound. But in 1767 France ceded the islands to Spain, De Bougainville being used as intermediary. Meanwhile in 1765 Commodore Byron had taken possession on the part of England on the grounds of prior discovery and had formed a settlement at Port Egmont, on the small island of Saunders. The Spanish and English settlers remained in ignorance, real or assumed, of each others presence until 1769-1770 when Byron's action wasnearly the cause of a war between England and Spain, both countries having armed fleets to contest the barren sovereignty. In 1771, however, Spain yielded the islands to Great Britain by convention.

Historical excerpt from text article on Falkland Islands per Encyclopedia Britannica, Edition XV, published in 1974.

It is not clear who discovered the Falklands. It seems likely that the English Navigator John Davis in the "Desire" was the first to sight them, in 1592; Sebald Van Weerdt, a Dutchman who was in the region in 1600, gave his name to them on maps of the 17th and 18th centuries. The French navigator, Louis Antoine De Bougainville, in 1764, founded the first settlement on East Falkland. The British, in 1765, were the first to settle West Falkland. They were driven off in 1770, however, by Spanish troops, Spain having bought out the French. War between Britain and Spain was averted only when Spain agreed to return "the port and fort called Egmont" to the British. For economy the British naval garrison was withdrawn in 1774, leaving a plaque claiming full sovereignty over all the Falklands for the British Crown. Spain maintained its settlement until 1806, when an uprising against Spanish authority broke out in Buenos Aires province,Argentina. Spain made no further claim to jurisdiction, but in 1816 the United Provinces of the Río de La Plata claimed to succeed Spain in sovereignty over all the Falklands and took possession of Soledad in 1820. A local governor was installed in 1828. Four years later the British government reasserted its claims to the Falklands, and in 1833 a British force peacefully expelled the Argentine soldiers and their vessel from Soledad and raised the British flag. The British prime minister said in 1834 that the British were not prepared to permit "any other state to exercise a right as derived from Spain, which Britain had denied to Spain herself."

In 1842 the capital was removed to Stanley. Settlement continued, and by 1885 the community of nearly 1,800 persons was self-supporting. In 1892 the Falklands were granted the status of a colony. In World War I (on December 8,1914) the Falklands were the scene of a naval battle between British and German fleets.